

## **FY 2015 STUDY OF THE U.S. INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT LEADERS ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP**



### **Program Description:**

Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI) for Student Leaders are intensive short term academic programs whose purpose is to provide groups of undergraduate student leaders with a deeper understanding of the United States, while simultaneously enhancing their leadership skills. The five-week Institutes will consist of a balanced series of seminar discussions, readings, group presentations, and lectures. The coursework and classroom activities will be complemented by educational travel, site visits, leadership activities, and volunteer opportunities within the local community. The Institutes will include an academic residency component of approximately four weeks and a domestic study tour of approximately one week. During the academic residency, participants will also have the opportunity to engage in educational and cultural activities outside of the classroom.

Pending final approval, the Institute on Women's Leadership will begin with an opening conference in Washington, D.C., tentatively scheduled for July 1, 2015. The one-day conference will bring together 80 SUSI student leaders and approximately 20 U.S. student ambassadors from the four Institutes on Women's Leadership and will set the tone for the Institutes. The women will have opportunities to network with one another and meet with inspiring U.S. women leaders representing various professional fields.

The 20 participants in this Institute will then travel to the University of Kansas where they will engage in a four week academic residency focusing on adaptive leadership, change and empowerment, in the context of both the participant's own society and of U.S. society. The curriculum will examine the progress of women in society from both a U.S. and a broader perspective and includes sessions on diversity and gender studies. The academic residency will be complemented by an educational study tour that will take participants to the Amish Country and finally to Chicago, Illinois where participants will conclude the program and depart the United States. Throughout the Institute, participants will visit relevant local women's organizations to meet with women leaders. They will also be challenged to create a Mission, Vision, Values (MVV) plan and a Leadership for Change Plan (LCP) to implement in their home community. Information on the program can be found at <http://www.kwli.org/>.

## **Other Essential Program Information:**

**A. Program Funding:** Through the award to the University of Kansas, ECA will cover all participant costs, including: program administration; domestic travel and ground transportation; book, cultural, mailing and incidental allowances; and housing and subsistence.

**B. Housing and Meal Arrangements:** Housing will be in university dormitories located on campus. Participants will be expected to share a room and bathroom with another student of the same gender. The housing provided will have both a security door and a 24-hour security attendant. Most meals will be provided at campus facilities, though participants may have access to a kitchen to cook some meals on their own. It is important that nominees are aware of these arrangements and that they are comfortable with such accommodations.

Care will be taken to ensure that any special requirements regarding diet, daily worship, housing, and medical care are satisfied. Please note that the most of the program will take place during Ramadan. While the host institution will make every effort to accommodate participants who are fasting, participants should be made aware of the rigorous nature of the Institute and the expectation that the success of the Institute depends on their full participation. It should also be noted that the hours of daylight in Kansas are significantly longer than what participants may be accustomed to. Daylight may be as long as 15 hours per day.

**C. Health Benefits:** All participants will receive the Department of State's coverage of \$100,000 with a \$25 co-pay for the duration of the program. Pre-existing conditions are not covered. Information on the health benefit program may be found online at [usdos.sevencorners.com](http://usdos.sevencorners.com).

**D. Program Requirements and Restrictions:** Participants are expected to fully participate in the academic program. They should attend all lectures and organized activities, and complete assigned readings. Candidates should be made aware that the Institute is very intensive and that there will be little time for personal pursuits unrelated to the program.

Under no circumstances are participants allowed to arrive in the U.S. prior to the start date of the Institute or remain in the U.S. after its end date. Similarly, participants will not be permitted to leave the Institute to visit relatives or friends while in the U.S. If a relative or friend wishes to visit them, it will be addressed on a case by case basis, in consultation with the ECA program officer and the host institution.

Violations of program rules, host institution rules, or local, state or federal laws can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. It is important that these requirements and restrictions be made clear to all candidates before nominations are submitted.

**E. English Language Ability:** All candidates **must** be proficient in English so that they can actively participate in the academic program. Host institutions will take into account that the level of comprehension and speaking ability of students may vary, and will prepare lectures and discussions that meet the highest academic standards while using language appropriate for students where English is their second or third language.

## Candidate Description and Qualifications:

The participants are expected to be highly motivated first through third year undergraduate students from colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education, who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied, and may include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, business, and other professional fields. Emphasis should be made on recruiting participants from non-elite backgrounds, from both rural and urban areas, and with little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside their home country. In addition, recruitment of participants should include historically underserved groups such as indigenous groups, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities.

Candidates nominated for this program will:

- -be female;
- -be proficient in English;
- -be interested in the topic of Women's Leadership;
- -be between 18 and 25 years of age;
- have at least one semester left of their undergraduate studies, and therefore be committed to return to their home universities following completion of the program;
- -demonstrate strong leadership qualities and potential in their university and community activities;
- -indicate a serious interest in learning about the United States;
- -have a sustained high level of academic achievement, as indicated by grades, awards, and teacher recommendations;
- -demonstrate commitment to community and extracurricular university activities;
- -have little or no prior study or travel experience in the United States or elsewhere outside of their home country;
- -be mature, responsible, independent, confident, open-minded, tolerant, thoughtful, and inquisitive;
- -be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive academic program, community service, and educational travel; and,
- -be comfortable with campus life, prepared to share living accommodations, and able to make adjustments to cultural and social practices different from those of their home country.

## How do I apply?

Complete an application form and submit it to **IslamabadExchanges@state.gov** by **Sunday December 14, 2014**. Only emailed applications will be considered for review.

Take special care in answering the essay questions. When E-mailing the Application kindly use the following format for Subject line: **Applicant Name, Name of Institution, City in which you study**, for e.g. **GULSHAN BATOOL, NUST, ISLAMABAD**. (This is Important, please do not ignore this.)

## Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ section addresses some commonly asked questions by posts. If you cannot find an answer to your question please contact the program officer for this Institute. Contact information of the program officer can be found in paragraph 7.

- a. What degree of English proficiency should a nominee have?** All participants must be fully proficient in English; throughout the Institute they will need to fully understand lectures, actively participate in discussions, and read and write assignments in English.
- b. Can a nominee who is a dual citizen (U.S. and country of origin) participate in Study of the U.S. Institutes?** No. U.S. citizens and permanent residents (green card holders) are **NOT** eligible to participate in this program.
- c. Can we nominate an individual who is not a citizen of the nominating post country?** Yes. However, Study of the U.S. Institutes are programs designed to further mutual understanding between U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries. If you wish to nominate someone who is not a citizen of the nominating country, please explain clearly on the application the reasons for the nomination.
- d. My nominee has been to the U.S. before; would he/she be disqualified?** No. Nominees with very minimal experience in the United States may be considered for the program. However, priority will be given to nominees with no previous experience in the United States. If you find it necessary to nominate a candidate with previous U.S. experience, please be sure to clearly indicate the purpose of the nominee's visit to the U.S., the year, and the length of his/her stay as requested on the nomination form.
- e. My nominee will be fasting during Ramadan. How will this impact his/her participation in the program?** Participants who will be fasting during Ramadan are still expected to **fully participate** in the program. Participants must be aware of the rigorous nature of the program and the expectation of full participation in planned activities. Some activities such as community service and site visits may take place outdoors in high temperatures and humidity. Participants should be aware of the challenging nature of the program, especially on long travel days during the educational study tour and in locations that experience long hours of sunlight. For example, in the northern United States, the sun rises around 5:30 am and sets around 9:30 pm.
- f. What accommodations will host institutions make for participants who are observing Ramadan?** Host institutions will make every effort to accommodate fasting participants. For example, host institutions should provide access to kitchens and refrigerators so participants can prepare and store food. Participants should be aware that Halal food may not be readily available in some parts of the United States. Host institutions will also accommodate participants who may wish to attend Friday prayers at the local mosque.
- g. How much free time will a participant have during the program?** There will be some free time during the program. However, nominees **MUST** understand that this is an intensive academic program and they are expected to fully participate in all lectures, activities, site visits, and scheduled events.

- h. If a nominee has relatives in the U.S., would he/she have time to see them?** Participants will **NOT** be allowed to leave the Institute to visit relatives or friends. Occasionally it is possible for a relative or friend to visit the participant on a specific day designated by the host institution if the schedule permits. These situations will be addressed on a case by case basis in consultation with the ECA program officer and the host institution.
- i. How important it is to nominate a gender balanced group?** Very important! We strive to have the best possible diversity and gender balance in the Institutes (except for Women's Leadership institutes).
- j. Can a participant arrive early/late or stay after the Institute?** No. Participants who choose to travel to the United States on a Study of the U.S. Institute are required to abide by the terms and conditions of the program. These terms state clearly that student leaders may **NOT** arrive in the United States before the program start date or remain in the country after the close of the institute.
- k. Can a graduate student participate in this Institute?** No. Study of the U.S. Institutes are designed exclusively for undergraduate students with at least one remaining semester of study.
- l. Can a participant miss one part or component of the Institute?** No. All participants are expected to participate in all scheduled lectures, events, site visits, trips, and activities.
- m. How much money will participants need to bring for the program?** The Study of the U.S. Institutes cover all basic costs of an individual's participation including transportation, lodging, and meals. Generally, host institutions provide for meals through a combination of a cafeteria meal plan, a pre-loaded debit card for use at local restaurants, and/or a cash allowance to permit participants to purchase food for cooking. Information on housing and meal arrangements will be provided by the host institution six weeks prior to the start of the Institute. Other than the meal stipend mentioned above, participants should not expect to receive any spending money from the Institute. Participants should bring their own spending money if they wish to purchase souvenirs or other items during their time in the United States.
- n. My nominee participated in the English Access Micro scholarship Program; can he/she participate in this Institute?** Yes.
- o. One of our SUSI alumni has a sibling who would like to apply for the SUSI program. Can (S)he apply?** Priority will be given to nominees who are unrelated to past SUSI participants. Posts should make every effort to recruit and nominate candidates from diverse backgrounds, areas, and universities.
- p. Are participants permitted to smoke during the Institute?** Yes. However, participants should be aware that many places in the United States now prohibit smoking. Smoking in such places could be considered a violation of the law. Some places that may prohibit smoking are university housing, classrooms, office buildings, restaurants, public parks, and other locations. Smoking laws will vary from location to location so participants who smoke should look for designated smoking areas.